Past Pursuits

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Akron-Summit County Public Library

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In It for the Long Haul: Roadway Express, Inc.

by Cheri Goldner, Librarian

Akron's rubber industry had much to do with another of its major industries, long haul trucking. With Firestone's development of the pneumatic tire for automobiles in 1904 and improvements to the nation's road system, roads were easier to navigate and goods were easier to transport using them. Goodyear started its Wingfoot Express Service from Akron to Boston in 1917 and, with much fanfare, its Transcontinental Motor Express to San Francisco the following year. The industry became a booming one in the years following World War I, and even while the Depression put the brakes on operations for some smaller companies, others thrived. One of these was Roadway Express, Inc., built by brothers Carroll J. and Galen J. Roush.

Roadway Express truck about 1940. Photo from the Roadway Express Collection.

Carroll, a graduate of Akron High School and Hiram College, taught English and Latin at Akron North School before resigning to work in the trucking industry. With his friend Charles "Chick" Morrison, he cofounded R&M Transportation Company.

R&M operated out of a small office on Kenmore Boulevard and hauled its first load of freight from Goodrich in February 1930. In April, Roush's brother, Galen, joined the organization and operations moved to the Cotter Warehouse on Brook Street, closer to their terminal on 97 East South Street. The brothers bought out Chick Morrison, and, with Galen's brother-in-law (and no relation to Chick) John W. Morrison, incorporated Roadway Express, Inc. in November 1930.

Both brothers were known for their work ethic. As a neighbor recalled, Carroll "dressed most of the time in work clothes because he liked to work." Galen, also a former teacher as well as a coach, World War I veteran and lawyer, was described by *Akron Beacon Journal* staff writer Robert Downing as "a quiet, unassuming man who avoided publicity and fame… and once listed his hobbies as his 'family and work.'" He felt so strongly about service that if a truck wasn't available for a rush pickup, he would rent a truck and handle the shipment personally. His ethic extended to his own health, and he was well known at the YMCA. Even after his 80th birthday, he was able to do head-to-the-floor sit-ups and ran several miles a week, and he finished fourth in the Y's annual swim marathon not long before his death.

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It wasn't surprising, then, that what started as a two-truck company thrived. In 1949, Roadway moved its headquarters to 147 Park Street. On July 20, 1952, as the August 1952 employee publication *Spotlight* reported, it opened "one of the newest and most modern terminals in the nation" at 1355 East Archwood Avenue near Highway 224. In 1962, Roadway moved headquarters again to 1077 Gorge Boulevard.

At the end of 1973, Roadway had 246 terminals in 30 states, including 36 that opened that year. It became the largest general trucking company in the United States in terms of freight revenues, with locals hearing community leader, actress, and radio voice Mary Catherine (Kitty) Brown as Tessie the Ten-Ton-Trailer in ads and people everywhere seeing those "big orange trucks."

July 1957 issue of the Roadway Express Digest. *Image from the Roadway Express Collection.*

In 1956, Carroll sold his interest in the firm and moved to California, where he acquired the small trucking firm ONC Fast Freight and built it into the twelfth-largest trucking company in the country. He retired in the early 1970s and passed away at his home in Portola Valley on February 27, 1982 at the age of 76.

Galen stayed with Roadway until retiring from the company chairmanship in 1974. After suffering a heart attack while swimming at the Central Men's YMCA in July 1975, he resigned from the company's board of directors for health reasons in February 1976 and passed away just a few months after, on June 15, at the age of 84.

In 1993, Roadway acquired Canadian company Reimer Express, and in 2003 joined Yellow Roadway Corp. In 2009, all three companies came together as YRC, Inc., which was renamed YRC Freight in 2012.

Special Collections is fortunate to have a small Roadway Express Collection documenting the history of this local company as well as the Robert O. Orr Collection and Trucking History Collection. For more information on these collections and Akron's trucking industry, view the finding aids on our website, search our Archives Catalog, or contact Special Collections.

A. O. Austin at work in his laboratory, 1953. Photo from the Akron Beacon Journal Photograph Collection, Summit Memory.

Getting to Know...Arthur Oswin Austin

by Rebecca Larson-Troyer, Librarian

Arthur O. Austin of Barberton earned international renown for his achievements in the fields of electrical engineering and radio, amassing over 200 patents in his 84 years. Born on December 28, 1879, in Stockton, California to Oswin and Mary Hamman Austin, A. O. spent his childhood in California before graduating from Leland Stanford University in 1903 with a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering. After pursuing opportunities on both the east and west coasts, Austin settled in Barberton at the Ohio Insulator Company in 1908. Ohio Insulator, a division of Ohio Brass of Mansfield, manufactured high-voltage insulators and fittings, in which Austin became one of the nation's foremost experts.

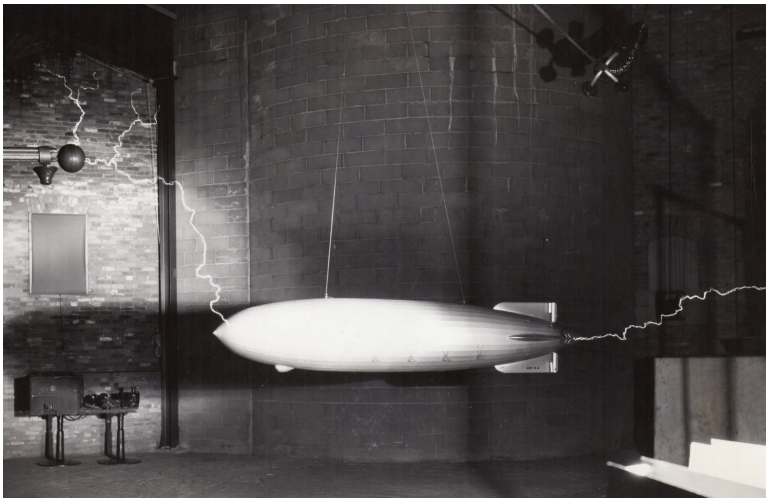
Shortly before coming to Barberton, Austin married Eleanor Briggs of Rochester, New York in 1907. After nearly 12 years

of marriage, the couple suffered a tragic accident in which Austin was injured and Eleanor killed as they traveled Massachusetts' Mohawk Trail in 1919. In July 1921, Austin married Eleanor's younger sister Augusta, with whom he had two daughters, Barbara, who died just after her first birthday, and Martha, who became Martha Gormley.

A. O. Austin's outdoor laboratory at the Anna Dean Farm in Barberton. Photo from the Akron Beacon Journal Collection.

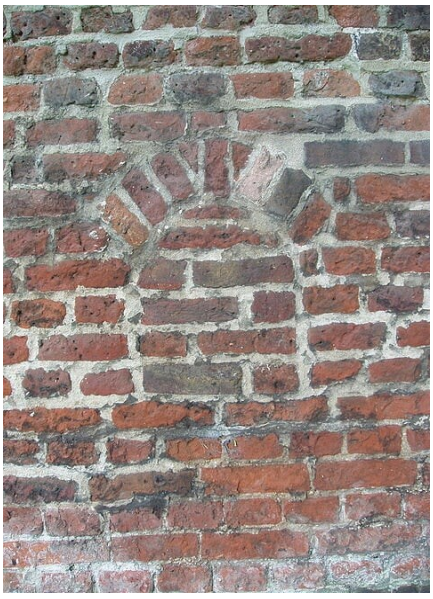
In 1926, Austin purchased several hundred acres of land in then Coventry Township, a portion of the expansive Anna Dean Farm established by Barberton town founder Ohio C. Barber. The Austin family made their home in the estate's 50,000-square-foot mansion, while Austin set up his work in and around the former farm's unmistakable French Renaissance Revival-style barns. There, Austin built what was reported to be the most powerful outdoor high-voltage laboratory in existence at the time, including three of the world's largest transformers. A 1933 report by the Newspaper Enterprise Association described the laboratory as "a weird place, filled with cage-like structural towers, and dominated by three mammoth transformers. From an insulated ball suspended in the air, at Austin's will 30-foot flashes of lightning leap to the ground with a crack like a rifle shot." Austin was well known for experiments testing the effects of lightning on various aircraft, including Goodyear Zeppelin Corp. airship models. He hosted engineers from around the world who came to see his laboratory and watch the "electrical wizard" at work.

Austin spent more than two decades at Ohio Insulator, rising to the level of manager of the Barberton plant and chief engineer of the larger Ohio Brass Company. In 1933, he left the company and established Austin Insulator, Inc., working as a consulting engineer and dedicating much of the rest of his life to his experiments. In addition to high-voltage electricity, Austin made significant contributions to radio and broadcasting, designing better transmission devices and more efficient, powerful antennae towers capable of broadcasting a signal from Cleveland to New Zealand.



Airship lightning test in A.O. Austin's laboratory. Photo from the Akron Beacon Journal Collection.

Austin died June 7, 1964 at Barberton Citizens Hospital after an extended illness. His large estate, a portion of which he had worked to develop into the Austin Estates and the controversial, never-realized Austin Village Shopping Center, proved to be a complex and enduring issue for Barberton. Following Austin's death, the mansion he called home for nearly forty years came down at the behest of his heirs who described taxes and upkeep on the property as burdensome. While some members of the community had worked to see the historic property saved, a plan and necessary funding never developed, a much-lamented series of events still debated to this day. Though often recognized locally for being the Barber Mansion's second (and longest) owner, Austin earned his reputation as one of the preeminent electrical engineers of his generation, a man who made invaluable contributions to his field and our ability to harness electricity, which he called "the most wonderful element in control of, and serving mankind."



Turn Your Brick Walls into Open Windows

by Jane Gramlich, Librarian

Is there any genealogist who hasn't encountered the frustrating dead end of research we call a brick wall? These roadblocks can mean different things to different researchers. One common definition is not being able to jump back a generation on the family tree by identifying the parents of an ancestor. But other kinds of relationships and certain types of records can be brick walls too. Essentially, a brick wall can be anything we can't find, so it's very dependent on our own abilities and perceptions, as well as the availability of the most relevant records. A wall to one genealogist might be just a curtain to another who has the necessary tools and knows how to use them.

Some questions may never be answered definitively and the paper trail runs out eventually. If you've ever watched television shows like *Who Do You Think You Are?* or *Finding Your Roots*, you'll know that even teams of professional researchers encounter these problems. Still, it's unfortunate that "brick wall" somehow became the common phrase and symbol for a genealogical blank space. The imagery works against us, discouraging us from even trying to discover an answer. Don't shut your mind closed on the matter. Instead, think of it as an open window framed by the knowledge you have. Think about what might fit in that space and pursue those theories. Keeping the question open and active will alert you to new paths of research and possible outcomes. Sources that were once hard to access are being unearthed daily, and we're in an era of digital and scientific advances that are leading to more breakthroughs than ever before.

Specific brick walls take specific approaches. For some excellent detailed advice, check out *101 Brick Wall Busters* and FamilySearch's *Solving Tough Research Problems—Overcoming Brick Walls*. There are some general guidelines, however, that are useful for solving any genealogical problem. If a brick wall can be broken down, it will probably be done by at least one of these approaches or a combination of them.

The Genealogical Proof Standard: All the steps are important, but "reasonably exhaustive research" and "thorough analysis and correlation"—in other words, more advanced research techniques—are key with brick walls. Strong genealogy requires a solid knowledge of geography and history. Also important is offline research in libraries, courthouses, and archives, seeking out more obscure sources with hidden nuggets of information. Targeted database searches aren't always enough; it's often necessary to browse unindexed records. Brush up on logical and creative thinking skills and work on ferreting out subtle clues in records. Look at the information you're able to find from different angles. If the one record you need is out of reach, several other records combined can do the trick. There are many resources that can help researchers with these skills, such as George G. Morgan and Drew Smith's *Advanced Genealogy Research Techniques*. Patience is more than a virtue and persistence is a must, but these will work only when combined with good research skills and accessible records.

The FAN Club: Elizabeth Shown Mills' phrase is apt. To break down brick walls, we need to become fans of our ancestors' ***F***amily, ***A***ssociates, and ***N***eighbors. No one exists without connections to others, so limiting research to your direct ancestor line is sure to lead to an abyss. Answers and clues can often be found in the records of those who were near your ancestor. Start by studying whole family groups and extended families. Look at records for nearby residents and those with an associated surname. Neighborhood and community research will give you hints, new sources and broader understanding. When few or no historical records exist for an individual, that person is often identified and understood only by surrounding people and circumstances that are better documented.

Networking: Social media can open multiple doors to new resources and has helped many with their brick wall challenges. Messaging through databases like Ancestry and MyHeritage and posting on boards or blogs can be helpful, and don't forget good old-fashioned conversation by phone or in person. The principle remains

the same whether online or offline: Communicate, ask questions, and share your own knowledge. No individual knows everything, but as a whole, genealogists have much to offer each other.

Genetic genealogy: DNA testing is opening up new channels of discovery faster than we can process them. It can give us scientific backup to either confirm or refute what written records say about biological relationships or provide evidence when no records exist. Find a cousin match with a reliable family tree that you can verify, and you could end up with evidence pointing to a sibling of an ancestor you never knew existed. That will open up new information to build upon, and you could be one step closer to identifying their parents.

Jumping over genealogical hurdles takes all manner of tools, skills, and knowledge brought together and applied in the right place. Ultimately, the best brick wall buster is your own intelligent self. Put on a hardhat and chip away! Continue to learn and grow, and you may find your brick walls falling away to reveal open windows. Little by little, an answer might take shape and come into view.

A postcard of the Copley Depot. Image from the Ruth Wright Clinefelter Postcard Collection, Summit Memory.

200 Years of Copley Township

by Barbara Leden, Librarian

In 1807, Gardiner and Elizabeth Greene of Connecticut became owners of Township No. 2, Range 12 of the Western Reserve. According to General L.V. Bierce, author of *Historical Reminiscences of Summit County*, the township name started out as Greenfield. It was ultimately named Copley after John Singleton Copley, who was a famous colonial painter, a descendant of Lord Copley of England, and the father of Elizabeth Greene. Boston's Copley Square, Copley Square Hotel, Copley Plaza, and the Copley crater on Mercury also bear his name. Copley officially became a township on July 5, 1819.

The area was commonly known as Copley Swamp because most of the land was low-lying and wet. Before the early European settlers arrived, the Erie Indian tribe settled in the area on a higher piece of land called Fort Island. During the War of 1812, a solider by the name of Jonah Turner came through the area with Major Croghan's battalion. He liked it enough that after the war, in 1814, he decided to purchase land around the Stony Ridge area to become the first settler in Copley. Originally in Medina County, Copley fell within Summit County's borders when it was established in 1840.

Early settlers worked hard to settle the land from wilderness. Wild animals living in the Copley Swamp threatened area livestock, and according to historian Karl Grismer, "a circular hunt was held in December, 1821" to remove the animals from the swamp. Among the animals killed in the hunt were four bears and two wolves. The *Copley Historian* reported that Copley Center was comprised of land donated by early settlers Jonathan Starr, Leavitt Weeks, Simon P. Starr, and Heman Oviatt. Some of the earliest enterprises in Copley were potash production, farming, sawmills, and distilleries. The township became known for producing good whiskey, used, they claimed, for sickness and sacramental purposes. Samuel Lane, in *Fifty Years and Over of Akron and Summit County*, noted that some distilleries were "turning out as high as 50 gallons per day." Perhaps because of this, "as early as October, 1829, a temperance organization was effected, believed by some to be the first regular society of this kind in Ohio."

HAS RELICS OF EARLY DAYS!

Ex-County Commissioner Owns Cradle Made by his Father, First White Child Born In Copley Township—Old Inn Signboard Used 130 Years Ago

G.H.S. INN. 1818.

In the 1920s, some of Copley's earliest relics were housed in the attic of Eugene A. Hawkins. Akron Beacon Journal, *July 2, 1927.*

In a July 1927 article from the *Akron Beacon Journal*, Eugene A. Hawkins, son the first white child born in Copley, George Washington Hawkins, recalled days gone by in the area. A picture in this article shows a cradle made by his father and a sign that is all that remains of the "G.H.S. Inn." Hawkins stated that whiskey sold for 25 cents a jug and that "one of my early boyhood memories is seeing whiskey brought out to hands in the harvest fields."

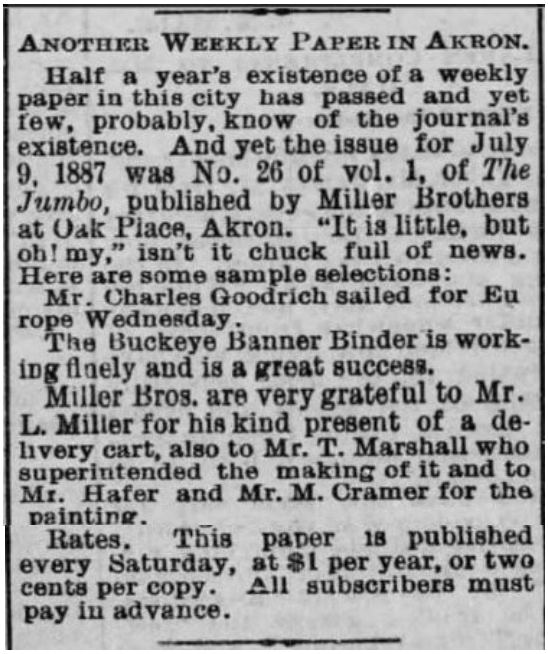
The Pittsburgh, Akron & Western Railroad opened a rail line through Copley around 1890, and the Copley Township Depot was built about that time. This opened the township to commerce from outside the area. The depot still stands today as a historical site and was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2001.The depot is located on Copley Road (State Route 162) west of Copley Center and is open the second Saturday of the month, April through October, 1-4 pm.

Modern Copley Township is primarily a residential area with some retail, industrial, and commercial sections. To celebrate its bicentennial, the township's Bicentennial Committee has created a website that will feature future activities. To help fund the celebration, you can purchase commemorative garden stones, mugs, quilt pieces for a community quilt, and a board game rendition of Monopoly called "Copley-opoly" highlighting local properties.

Save the Date for "Ethics in Genealogy" on August 17

Genealogy has always presented us with ethical challenges, and in the digital era these challenges are even more compelling. Make plans now to join Special Collections for an informative all-day program on Saturday, August 17, 9:30 am-4 pm in the Main Library Auditorium. "The Legal Genealogist" Judy G. Russell will present four lectures on topics such as copyright, DNA, and records access.

A full program description, speaker biography, and online registration are available on the Library's Event Calendar. For more information, please contact Special Collections at 330-643-9030 or speccollections@akronlibrary.org.



ANOTHER WEEKLY PAPER IN AKRON.

Half a year's existence of a weekly paper in this city has passed and yet few, probably, know of the journal's existence. And yet the issue for July 9, 1887 was No. 26 of vol. 1, of *The Jumbo*, published by Miller Brothers at Oak Place, Akron. "It is little, but oh! my," isn't it chuck full of news. Here are some sample selections:

Mr. Charles Goodrich sailed for Europe Wednesday.

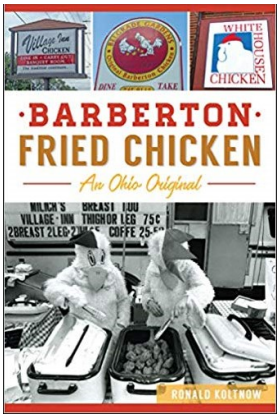
The Buckeye Banner Binder is working finely and is a great success.

Miller Bros. are very grateful to Mr. L. Miller for his kind present of a delivery cart, also to Mr. T. Marshall who superintended the making of it and to Mr. Hafer and Mr. M. Cramer for the painting.

Rates. This paper is published every Saturday, at $1 per year, or two cents per copy. All subscribers must pay in advance.

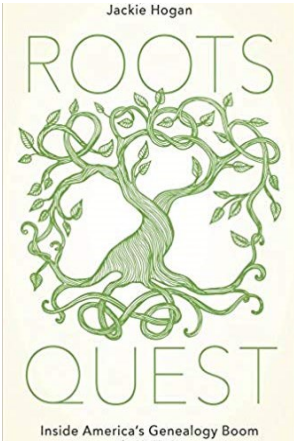
Have you ever heard of *The Jumbo*? We hadn't until now. It seems to have been a short-lived Akron newspaper that has since been lost. It's not mentioned in *Guide to Ohio Newspapers 1793-1973* and it's not in the newspaper holdings of the Ohio History Connection. This snippet appeared in the *Summit County Beacon* on July 20, 1887.

New Books



"Welcome to Chicken City, USA," proclaims Ronald Koltnow in *Barberton Fried Chicken: An Ohio Original*. Koltnow tells the story of the celebrated dish that put Barberton on the map of America's culinary heritage, including chapters on local iconic restaurants such as Belgrade Gardens, Hopocan Gardens, and Milich's Village Inn. Fans of Barberton and its famous fried chicken are sure to enjoy this lively and informative book.

For more new books recently added to our collection that can help you with your research, be sure to see the New Books page on our website.



In *Roots Quest: Inside America's Genealogy Boom*, author and sociologist Jackie Hogan analyzes genealogists' collective drive to track down ancestors and understand family history. Beginning with the development of genealogy both in America and in other cultures, Hogan goes on to tackle the questions of kinship, ethnicity, identity, and meaning that genealogy both raises and answers. Using the experiences of individual researchers as examples, Hogan demonstrates the grounding role of family history in a fragmented, rapidly changing world. Genealogists of all levels, from beginners and hobbyists to professionals and scholars, will see themselves very clearly in Hogan's revealing work.

We would like to thank the following for their generous contributions:

Cuyahoga Portage Chapter NSDAR for *Ethan Allen and the Green-Mountain Heroes of '76* and *Revolutionary Soldiers and Sailors from Lancaster County, Virginia* in memory of Ruth Jean Hall Cook, Dortha Alice Robinson Jessop, Barbara Brock Morehouse, and Evajean Moore Greenlun

Howland S. Davis II for genealogy books and periodicals

Summit County Chapter OGS for the purchase of the following books:

Apple Creek Cemetery: East Union Township, Wayne County, Ohio in memory of Gerald "Jerry" Woodling

Associates Cemetery: Salt Creek Township, Wayne County, Ohio in memory of Dreama Powell

The Small Cemeteries of Baughman Township…: Wayne County, Ohio in memory of Dreama Powell

Maize Cemetery: Wooster Township, Wayne County, Ohio in memory of Elizabeth Manuel

Mount Eaton West Lawn Cemetery: Paint Township, Wayne County, Ohio in memory of Elizabeth Manuel

Marshallville Maple Grove Cemetery: Chippewa Township, Wayne County, Ohio in memory of Dreama Powell

Secret Genealogy IV: Native Americans Hidden in our Family Trees in memory of Dreama Powell

The Great Falls of Tinkers Creek - Spring Flow
Image from the Artwork of Joseph Jesensky collection, Summit Memory.

The Akron-Summit County Public Library
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of the Main Library.

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